



THE  
CULTURE  
TRUST  
LUTON

IMPACT  
VISION  
VALUES



# OUR PURPOSE

We connect our community through culture. We add vibrancy, promote pride of place, create jobs, encourage engagement and regeneration.

# OUR WORK

The Culture Trust Luton is a vibrant and progressive charitable trust with a focus on arts and culture. Established in 2008, we welcome everyone to engage with our inspiring and animated cultural venues which include museums, theatres, an arts centre, gardens, libraries and creative workspaces.

We encourage individuals and groups to enjoy and learn about arts and culture, engage with heritage and use their talents and skills to grow their careers.

We actively support and showcase artistic talent, creativity and skill and provide opportunities for everyone to take part in reading, writing, performing, making, creating, experimenting, discussing, collaborating and presenting culture.

“Thank you very much for giving me this wonderful opportunity to show my work at the Storefront Gallery and engage with the audiences of Luton. I really appreciate all of your inspiring comments and feedback.”

— Yva Jung  
Artist



Image: The Culture Trust

# OUR PRIORITIES

## **1 WIDENING REACH**

We encourage more people, particularly from our diverse community, to enjoy and learn about arts and culture, engage with heritage and use their talents and interests to make a difference.

## **2 TALENT DEVELOPMENT**

We provide support for emerging artists and creative practitioners through creative workspaces, bursaries, residencies and partnerships that promote and showcase talent at all stages.

## **3 SUSTAINABILITY**

We use our resources effectively and we demonstrate the value and impact of our charitable work. We manage sustained reduction in the environmental impact of our organisation, our activities, processes and systems.

# OUR VISION

Our vision is to be an award winning cultural trust providing exemplary public engagement with arts and culture.

Our strategic aim is to be financially sustainable by 2025 by generating over 50% of our income through our activity, facilities and trading.



Image: The Culture Trust

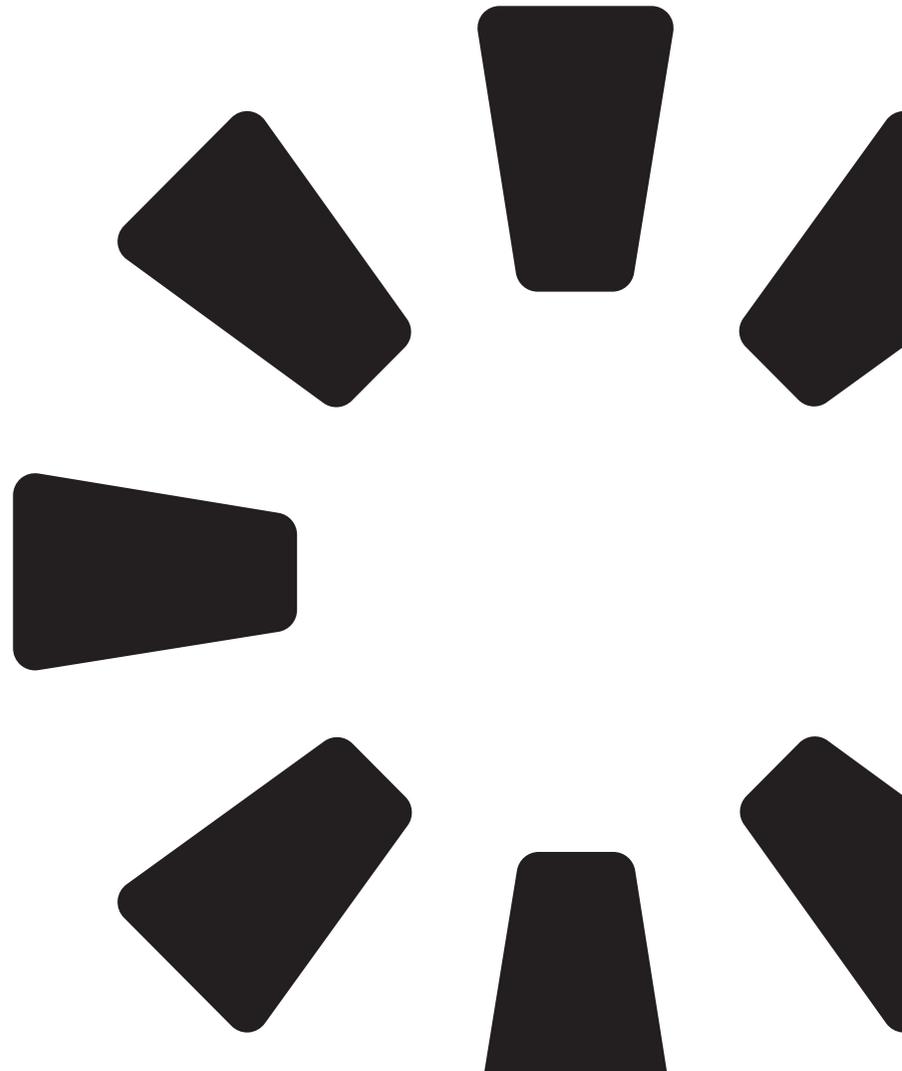
# OUR BRAND

After 11 successful years as an independent Cultural Trust, we are proud to launch our new iconic brand inspired by Luton's manufacturing and hatmaking heritage, architectural gems and the bringing together of our diverse community through culture.

The keystones in our new logo form the letter C – for Culture – and represent the different functions of our organisation coming together as a collection under one Trust.



The Culture Trust's collection of venues.  
Images: The Culture Trust



# OUR REACH

Every year we welcome over 900,000 visitors to our free of charge venues across Luton.

The map below highlights where our local and regional audience come from – spreading across Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The darker areas of pink show where we have a higher density of users and repeat visits.

## Count by postal district

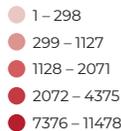
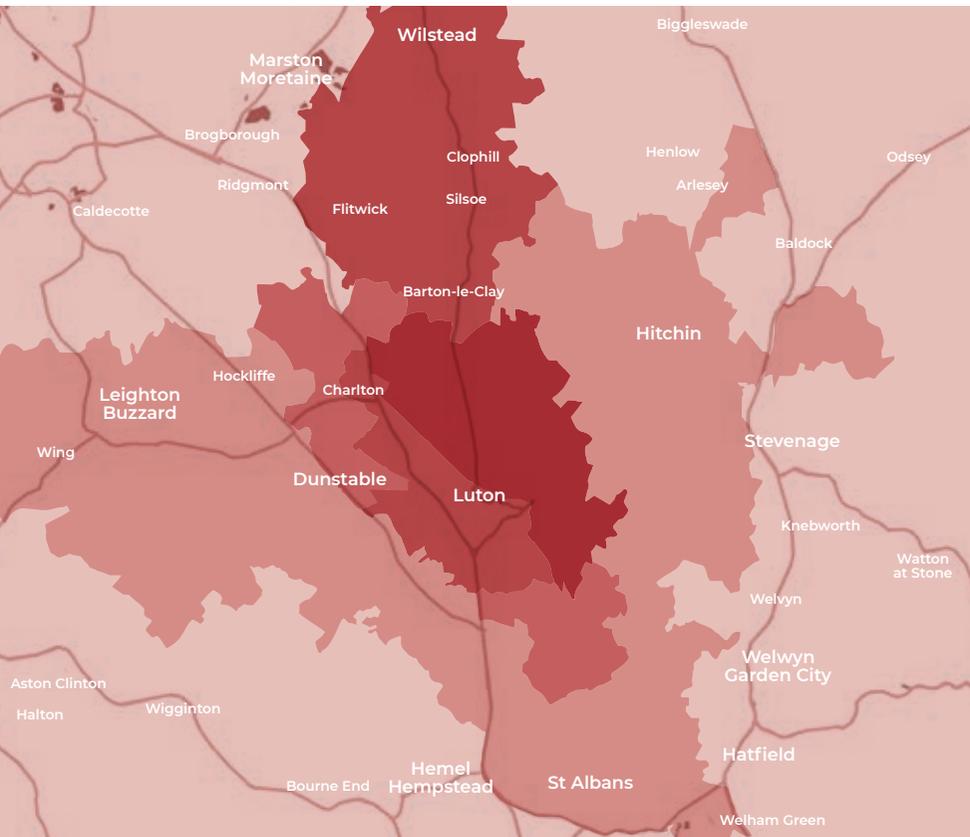


Image: Experian Ltd.



# OUR FUNDING

“Creative industries contribute significantly to making our towns vibrant and interesting places in which to live and work. Luton is already recognised as a national hotspot for creating jobs in this sector. So, it’s important that we support the Culture Trust in continuing to enhance good quality spaces through cultural activation and to nurture local talented people through developments like their transformational Hat District.”

— Hilary Chipping  
Chief Executive, SEMLEP

We’re very grateful to all our funders for supporting and enabling our work. Regular funding from Luton Borough Council, London Luton Airport Ltd. and Arts Council England is the cornerstone to our success. This funding underpins our ability to provide free venues, manage and care for our collections and heritage, provide library services and widen engagement with free and subsidised cultural activity.

We actively fundraise to deliver new and exciting work, grow cultural resources and invest in skills and talent. Thank you to our project funders:

- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (Local Growth Fund)
- Arts Council England
- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Historic England
- Architectural Heritage Fund
- DCMS Wolfson





Our PRIDE values define  
who we are and what we do

Passionate  
Relevant  
Inspiring  
Distinctive  
Ethical



# PASSIONATE

We do this by animating and making publicly accessible the following cultural venues:

## **WARDOWN HOUSE MUSEUM & GALLERY**

An eclectic and changing collection of curiosities, Luton objects, country house items, Royal regiment and the most complete hat collection in the UK.

## **STOCKWOOD DISCOVERY CENTRE**

Beautiful walled gardens, courtyard, café, woodland and museum which includes the Mossman Carriage Collection which is the largest in Europe!

## **THE HAT FACTORY ARTS CENTRE**

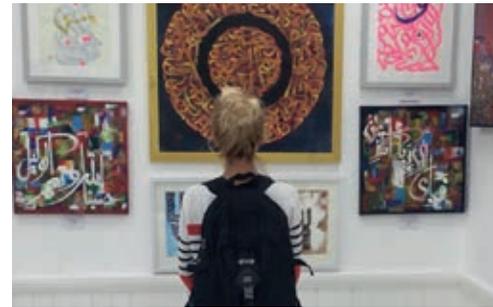
Newly refurbished in 2019, this well loved arts venue offers a diverse programme of live music, theatre, film and arts workshops lit up by familiar landmark 'Beacon' by Mark Titchner.

## **HAT HOUSE & HATWORKS**

2 former hat factories are being renovated to provide creative workspace for emerging and established creative entrepreneurs whilst regenerating heritage.

## **STOREFRONT GALLERY**

A new project space to showcase local and international contemporary artists, offer talks and lectures and community engagement projects.



Images: The Culture Trust

## **LIBRARIES**

Welcoming and well resourced with over 200,000 books and over 35,000 e-books across Luton Central Library, Marsh Farm, Bury Park, Lewsey, Leagrave and Stopsley.

## **LUTON LIBRARY THEATRE**

Popular with families and schools, this 238 seat theatre hosts over 70 events each year including touring productions, family theatre, comedy, music and spoken word.

## **WELL & WISE**

Provides a neutral environment for health organisations to offer advice for a wide range of physical and mental health issues in central library.

## **MUSEUMS COLLECTION STORE**

Where we conserve and care for over 2 million artefacts with our specialist team who also promote and share the collection locally, nationally and internationally.

# RELEVANT

We employ 139 people in our team and over 2250 Museum Makers and Library Makers, volunteers inspired to support our heritage sites and projects on a regular basis.

Our relevancy to our local communities is at the core of our success. We programme events and provide opportunities that our customers value and need, playing our part in raising the profile of Luton and making a difference.



Images: The Culture Trust

## **WE ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO HAVE A LOVE OF READING**

In 2018, our Libraries' Summer Reading Challenge saw 3,058 children taking part, up 8% on 2017 and 353 children joined our libraries to take part in the challenge.

## **WE CREATE AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE FAMILY ARTS EXPERIENCES**

Enchanted Stockwood, our new winter light show at Stockwood Discovery Centre, attracted over 5,500 visitors in 11 evenings during December 2018.

“Getting the arts and culture offer right has the ability to transform Luton and most importantly the health and wellbeing of our residents, particularly those most disadvantaged. The Culture Trust is well recognised for its positive role in delivering arts and culture and shares our determination to make Luton a fantastic and vibrant cultural destination enjoyed by residents and visitors and boosting our economy.”

— Robin Porter  
Chief Executive, Luton Borough Council

## **WE'RE PROVIDING PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS TO GROW SKILLS...**

Over 5,000 people have actively engaged in workshops led by artists in Storefront Gallery.

We commission artists to animate Luton and provide commentary about our town. Our Hat District art project engaged 42 artists in producing new work.

## **WE STIMULATE DEBATE**

Through our programme to raise awareness locally and nationally on relevant subjects such as mental health, identity, gender, social unrest and equality.

# INSPIRING

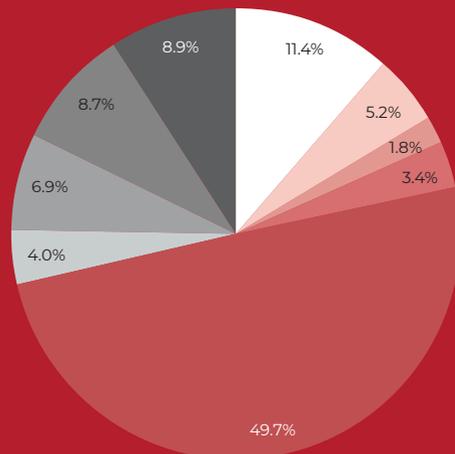
We entertain, stimulate and excite our audiences and customers through our cultural activities.

Our engagement levels tell us that we're getting things right and that we are inspiring communities to be active in arts and culture. The numbers speak for themselves...

Our team are inspiring specialists and ambassadors for culture who welcome visitors and share their knowledge with all. In 2018 we attracted 200,000 visits to Stockwood Discovery Centre, 90,000 to Wardown House Museum & Gallery, 80,000 to the Hat Factory Arts Centre and 550,000 visits to our Libraries – that's 920,000 visits in total!

Our visitor profile shows we are attracting a diverse audience across our sites in both age range and ethnicity.

● Asian/Asian British	11.4%
● Black/Black British	5.2%
● Chinese/Chinese British	1.8%
● Multiple Heritage	3.4%
● White British	49.7%
● White Irish	4.0%
● White Other	6.9%
● Other	8.7%
● Prefer Not to Say	8.9%



We inspire young people to connect with arts and culture through drama, arts workshops, theatre, music, homework clubs and Rhymetime. In 2018 170,000 0–16 year olds and 21,000 17–25 year olds got involved.

Our libraries are in the top quartile nationally for e-book loans, highlighting the changing ways we're accessing books and information and how we respond to customer needs.

We present positive and diverse role models through our programmes. We provide platforms to showcase arts and cultural leadership and inform cultural career choices. The diversity of our programme echoes the diversity of our community and the demographic profile of our visitors mirrors that of Luton.

# DISTINCTIVE

We apply creative thinking to everything that we do. We recognise and respect the distinctive qualities of our local heritage and this informs our future direction.

The Hat District creative cluster project is a key example of our vision for the future, delivering new opportunities for the creative sector and young people whilst creating long-term sustainability for the Trust.



Visualisation of Hat House top floor creative workspace



Image: Peter Laponder

“The vision for developing an ambitious cultural quarter was impressive. Luton is fortunate to have such a talented arts cultural trust, well deserving of the significant funding it has achieved.”

— Purple Flag Assessment, May 2018

We're leading the development of new work, study and show spaces for creative industries, entrepreneurs and practitioners in the heart of Luton. We will provide the conditions, facilities and infrastructure that connects creative and talented people so they can innovate, collaborate and grow successful careers

## **THE HAT DISTRICT PROJECT WILL:**

Secure £10 million of investment into Luton from outside funders to renovate 3 former hat factories and build 1 new creative workspace by 2021. We have already secured £8m to date.

Develop 25,000 sq ft of new and bespoke creative workspace to support, develop and enable 133 new jobs in the creative sector.

Boost the local economy by attracting 135,000 additional visits to the Hat District by 2022.

2 of 4 sites will be open in 2019 – Hat Factory and Hat House. Hat Works and Hat Studios will be open in 2021.

# ETHICAL

Sustainability is a key focus for us and we are constantly looking for ways to be greener.

Initiatives implemented over the last year include:

## **40% OF OUR SUPPLIERS ARE LOCAL**

Luton, Bedfordshire and the adjoining counties. By 2022 we aim to increase this figure to reduce our carbon footprint.

## **HOMEGROWN**

We use fruit and vegetables grown in our own gardens to make nutritious food for the Garden Café at Stockwood and have also removed all open-fronted refrigeration in our cafés.

## **INCLUSION**

We are over half way through our programme of having our team autism and dementia-friendly trained by 2022.

## **HERITAGE CARE**

Our project bringing unloved hat factories back into use as creative spaces in the Hat District was recognised in December 2018 with a Love Luton Award for Sustainability.



The Culture Trust team away day 2019

## **WELLBEING**

We recently introduced free water at our sites and removed plastic bottles. We're changing our food & drink offers (more reduced sugar and fair trade products) to ensure we're ethical, environmentally-friendly and nutritionally sound.

## **BEING GREEN**

We're reducing kilowatt use, paper & print use in all our workspaces with a target of being paper-free by 2022. We eliminate packaging and plastics wherever possible, recycle widely, compost as much as we can (including 100% of our coffee grounds!)

## **RECYCLING INCOME**

We are an ethical landlord. All of our rents and room hire income is invested back into providing free and subsidised activity. This helps us ensure that cost is not a barrier to cultural inclusion.

# EXCELLENCE IN THE MAKING

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